

Interview with Vedant

Far Beyond The Stars Darshan Diary Sunday 3 July 1977

Rekha, the sister of a resident sannyasin, Sheela, is here with our husband, Satya Vedant. They're Indian but have been living in the States for the past 10 years.

Rekha's sannyass King tonight is particularly significant for her-and for Vedant, as it was actually Rekha who first met Osho and fell in love with him some three years ago. Not wanting to take sannyass without her husband, she returned to the States. Vedant (so the story has it), determined to find out what all this nonsense was that had so bedazzled his wife, came flying over to India ... and promptly took sannyass!

Osho tells Rekha that she has been carrying a great load in her head, and to drop it now. He talks at length, his voice particularly gentle, about the worry and anguish she has been trying to hide inside. By and by the confident smile on Rekha's face begins to drop at the corners, her face softens and she begins to weep.

Osho then addresses the two of them together as there has been some difficulty in the relationship. Vedant has been feeling torn between his responsibilities as a father and husband and his desire to be here with Osho. Osho tells them that there need be no division; this is his whole message, that the world and God are not two. God is in the world, Osho reiterates. They are not two boats; your wife and children are in my boat! By being with your wife and children, you are with me. In fact that is my whole approach to life—to be utterly involved in life is the only way to be involved in God.

Osho says that once things have settled over this conflict, he will call Rekha and Vedant to join the ashram. He says he plans to have an international village of 5000 sannyasins .. that in the community he wants not couples, but people who are friends.

In an interview some days after this Darshan, Vedant says his first interest in Osho was more academic than anything else. He was given some books of Osho's by his father-in-law who thought they might be of interest to Vedant, at that time on the faculty of the University of California, Berkeley, lecturing in Indian literature. But it wasn't until he heard Osho talking on Mahavir some years later that he became really turned on.

Vedant: I thought that if this is the insight, the depth, but somebody is able to give, he must be an extraordinary person. I heard more and more, and after that things went out of my hands. I had only one thought in my mind—but I must go and see him.

He finally made it to Poona in January 1975. Expecting, and not receiving any red carpet treatment, Vedant was somewhat peeved and put off by the time he was granted Darshan with Osho.

Vedant: He said 'Do you have something to say?' So I started telling him that I always felt that something was missing and so on and so forth. While I was talking to him and looking into his eyes, all of a sudden I burst into tears. I mean, I just fell at his feet and I started crying the way I cried at Darshan the other night—just exactly like that. I remember I kept saying, 'And please don't leave me, please don't leave me. Be with me!' he kept saying, 'Yes, I will be with you. Don't worry, everything will be all right.' That gave me such a tremendous amount of release, and when I looked into his eyes, I can tell you that he was so full of compassion and love that I was swept away by it—those waves after waves that were coming from his eyes

Osho gave Vedant sannyass (Vedant recalls he 'didn't have the guts to say no') and he returned to the States.

Vedant: I was very much full of that energy—I was floating—and for three months it stayed with me. I was so peaceful, so serene, so together, integrated, everyone was amazed. I was always smiling and everybody was always making fun of the fact that I was always smiling! But what happened was that gradually everything started slipping through my hands. It was as if all that has been given was being lost somehow. Even though I was meditating and it was helping me, it was only helping me in the initial part .. but of course it started changing the process. As I can see, and I have communicated this to Osho many times, I still don't feel that I've changed even half an inch. I can only admit one thing—that the process has begun; something is broken and I'm definitely no longer the same, that is true, but not in the sense that I have made any meaningful progress. In some ways it does appear as if I have, that again

I seem to lose it; it comes again, again I lose it.

At this point I pounce on Vedant with a tricky one, asking him what he felt about Irish a question that knocks the most articulate off-balance!

Vedant: What do I feel about Osho? OOOHH!! Well, as I've always said since I first met him, it is very difficult to put into words. He is beyond description because he is a phenomenon and he is multidimensional. The only thing I keep repeating is that I have never seen such a compassionate man before. The more I think of him, the more I see him, the more it becomes confirmed that he is tremendously compassionate. I always say to people that if they ever wanted to see how Buddha must have been or Mahavir, or Christ, then just go and see Osho. To see him is to believe what it was like. I have had exposure to all these religions, ideas, philosophies and so on, and he is the only person who puts everything into perspective.

After seeing him, reading him and listening to him, everything has started falling into place. That is the greatest thing that has happened to me for which I am tremendously grateful, because now I am able to see things in what I read. I've read so many mystical works-Kabir and so on-and it was never, never, never as clear as it has become after seeing Osho reading him, listening to him.

Vedant had much to say of what he feels Osho significance is, will be. As he spoke he became more and more animated. At one stage I flashed on the fact that he is a lecturer and imagined myself one of his students, wishing I could visit this extraordinary sage he was raving about!

Vedant: I am reminded of this statement that Lord Krishna makes in the And Geeta when he says that whenever there is a decline in Dharma, he appears again and again to rejuvenate it. It is precisely in that context that I see Osho-but he has come to revive Dharma not the kind of Dharma that people understand through Scriptures but the Dharma that he spreads, that he defines, which is indescribable. Osho has defined Dharma so beautifully; nobody has ever done that before in recent times. So what I am saying is that Osho is a person who has a tremendous amount of circumference. Krishnamurti is to my understanding an enlightened person but he has a very limited range; he has a good depth but he has a limited

range. Osho has a very big circumference, and in that circumference there are centres or small circles. He can touch any circle within that range, and not only can he touch it but he can go deeper into each of those circles. So there is a big range, and within that range there is a depth and in depth there are more centres.

He is able to bring all these various traditions to a point where they meet each other—whether it is Jewish or Christian or Hindu or Buddhist or Jain. Now, this is a tremendous achievement, for you see, people can speak beautifully on one tradition: Buddha was talking on one line and he was great on that, and Mahavir was talking on one line and he was great, but to explain all these different paths with the same intensity, the same depth, with the same grasp And the insights that Osho brings are like arrows hitting me!

When I started listening to him on Mahavir it became so *unbearable!* I was so overwhelmed with the insights that he had. I said, 'My God! This is it! That's it! That is the only thing you can say about it!'

If you know Hindi and you hear his Hindi lectures, he is able to go not only into the depth of a thought or an idea but he is able to catch so many new nuances, and he picks up those nuances, interrelates them, correlates them and create such a big mosaic, like a collector or a composer. It's like a big orchestra that he createsso beautiful!

He has a tremendous control over the language; he has enlivened Hindi, he has made it more rich. His communication is extraordinary.

So he brings all these insights as if he goes down to the bottom of the ocean and brings them up. And another thing is that not only is he able to do that, and that is the most extraordinary contribution, but he is able to relate them back to modern times; he makes it relevant. Why is it that he catches attention? I mean, he could use those words—nirvana, moksha, and this and that, but he uses them by not simply throwing them at you but by bringing them closer to your life, pure to your understanding, your problems, which is always the greatest

achievement or science of an incarnation. That is what he does: he cleans up the dust which has gathered on those words and brings them into context.

He is familiar with the modern terminology with the voracious reading that he does. He does it not to learn anything, as I see it, but to be familiar with the terms. He uses a word like 'energy' so that it becomes relevant; we can understand what he's talking about.

There are many other aspects which are there of course—his compassion, his love. He is able to touch your core inside as well as your head, which Krishnamurti's not able to do.

He gave one definition of truth which I think is so beautiful. He says, 'Truth is that which works'and he is making that truth workable in my life. To understand is one thing and to know it, to know from your very being, from the very guts level of it, is different. If I know something, of course it becomes part of my existence. As long as it doesn't become part of my existence, I remain as I am because only understanding does not help.

I can certainly articulate what Osho is saying and that does give me some satisfaction, but when it comes to an experiential level, when I'm in interaction, the very thing that I was able to articulate is not coming through in my living.

I interrupted at this point to ask Vedant what he thinks the effect of what Osho is doing will have on the world in general.

Vedant: As I see it, there is no way for whoever has come in contact with Osho to remain the same, whether it's half an inch or one foot all hundred feet, that's a different matter but change is going to occur. If this change does occur, I think that on the level of love, all sannyasins will have the capability to bring other people closer to the message of the truth that he has given—even after he leaves. If that change does occur on the level of making ourselves more loving—not more intelligent, not more intellectual but more loving—the understanding that we have gained will also make some sense.

But I also know that this whole thing that is going on will turn

into a dead organisation at some point, the light will be gone. Those who are in love with Osho, who are closer to him, would definitely want to keep away from the organisation.

And those people who are not coming right now, I can tell you that after Osho leaves they will start coming. The Poona city itself will have an Osho Road one day—they will definitely have an Osho Road or an Osho Hall (it sounded ludicrous but all to probable!)-but after this whole thing has happened, in fifty, hundred years time they will have that.

But for those of us who have had the fortune of coming close to him, I have the feeling that there is no way we could remain the same. Now we might not necessarily be able to transform ourselves completely—some of us might; they will be the lucky ones you can do that; but a person who is transformed will have a very far-reaching impact on a whole lot of people in such a way that they will start getting the idea that they are missing something. At least you might be able to shake them up, and if you are more capable you might even be able to convey the message that he has given, create the energy and the interest and bring them forth.

He says that you cannot change the outside world without changing the inside—which is very true. Of course sociologists say that they also bring changes. Yes, they do, but they are all adjustments, they are not necessarily changes. Fundamentally things remain the same: only people change. If change has happened to some of us, that will be able to influence people.

Said his insistence is to change from the inside, and that is possible with only a few people. He is not interested in the crowd: he is interested in genuine people.

Now, when I see this and go back to tradition, this fits everything well, because even those people who came in the past, they never had anything to do with the crowd; they always worked with small groups of people. Those people in turn went out and started creating the chain reaction in other people. It seems ridiculous that the energy he has should be wasted for no reason rather than being concentrated on a few to whom it has some meaning. Why should he waste it? It is

understandable. Osho has said that when VivekAnand was here he said he just needed hundred sannyasins and he would change the whole country; Osho said 'I'm going to have hundred-I will have a hundred sannyasin who can do that. I'm not going to settle for less than that.' He said something to that effect, and of course he'll have more than hundred I hope. But this is the level at which these people work. They don't work on the periphery, they work at the level which is interested in the centre, and for that you cannot draw crowds. The crowd is interested in running on the periphery.

Maneesha: Maybe this is why he is staying in India.

Vedant: I have no clear cut answer as to why he s staying in India, but I feel one thing is that he is not interested in creating followers behind him. He is not on the ego trip that he should want to be able to say, 'I have two million followers', and so on and so forth. The second thing is that his body is so fragile and it really requires very careful nourishing. As soon as he went West they would start jumping on him. They just turn you into a commodity and start selling it. Reporters, businessmen would come, that would be terrible. But the real thing is that he doesn't have to go anywhere. He said many times if you are thirsty you come to the well-the well doesn't have to go to you!

If somebody wants to do a very meaningful job that is the only way to do it. If you start chasing people, they will turn you into just any Tom, Dick and Harry. There are hundreds of gurus sitting there (in the West) anyway. Another thing is I think he wouldn't leave because this is the country where Buddha and Mahavir and others lived and because of the work of past centuries there is something in the environment that facilitates what he is doing.

Maneesha: have you got anything else you want to put down to the record.

Vedant: Just two things. First of all I feel very happy that this time Rekha decided to join me and that she has decided to take sannyas, but now both of us are involved and she will be a reinforcing agent to me. So both of us will not only have

each other but will be able to put ourselves into the work that Osho is doing.

The second feeling is that I feel tremendously, tremendously grateful to Osho. I don't have any words to express my gratitude to Osho, not only for being compassionate but because he's the only person who gave me and has given me insights into things. It is true that because of my own weakness I am not able to put them into my life--and that is a frustration to me that I carry all the time --but at least I find myself fortunate to have been born at the time when he is here. He is able to make me see things *as they are*. He has given me that clarity and for that I am terribly grateful.

Maneesha: How do you feel about becoming an ashram night ashramite one day.

Vedant: That will be the greatest thing that could happen to me! It would give me the thing that I'm probably missing, a kind of satisfaction in feeling that I am at home. I don't know what I will be able to do but what ever Osho asks me, I will be very happy to do it.

